



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Ouachita National Forest
Mena Oden Ranger District

1603 Highway 71 N
Mena, AR 71953

File Code: 1950

Date: October 30, 2020

Dear National Forest Stakeholder:

This project announcement letter serves to initiate scoping, “an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed” (40 CFR 1501.7). Scoping is required for all Forest Service proposed actions, including those that would appear to be categorically excluded from further analysis and documentation in an EA or an EIS (36 CFR 220.4C(1)). I request your input on the following proposed actions regarding the management of the 2021 Mena Oden Farm Bill Thinning Project.

The Forest Service proposes to promote resiliency to insect and disease infestations through the implementation of thinning treatments to approximately 1,250 acres (see Table 1 and enclosed maps). As required by HFRA Section 605 c access will not include the construction of permanent roads and required temporary roads (approximately 1 mile) will be decommissioned no later than 3 years after the date on which the project is completed. Proposed treatment areas exist within the Brier Creek, Lower Irons Fork/Johnson Creek, and Powell Creek project areas on the Mena District. Including plantation stands of shortleaf pine, and shortleaf pine oak forest types. These areas were designated as areas of emphasis for increasing resilience to insect infestation and disease through section 602 of Title VI of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003(16 U.S.C.6591 et seq.). Section 602 was created by an amendment to HFRA in the Farm Bill of 2014. Design criteria would include maximizing the retention of old growth trees, retaining a diverse hardwood component, and minimizing road construction as appropriate for the forest type.

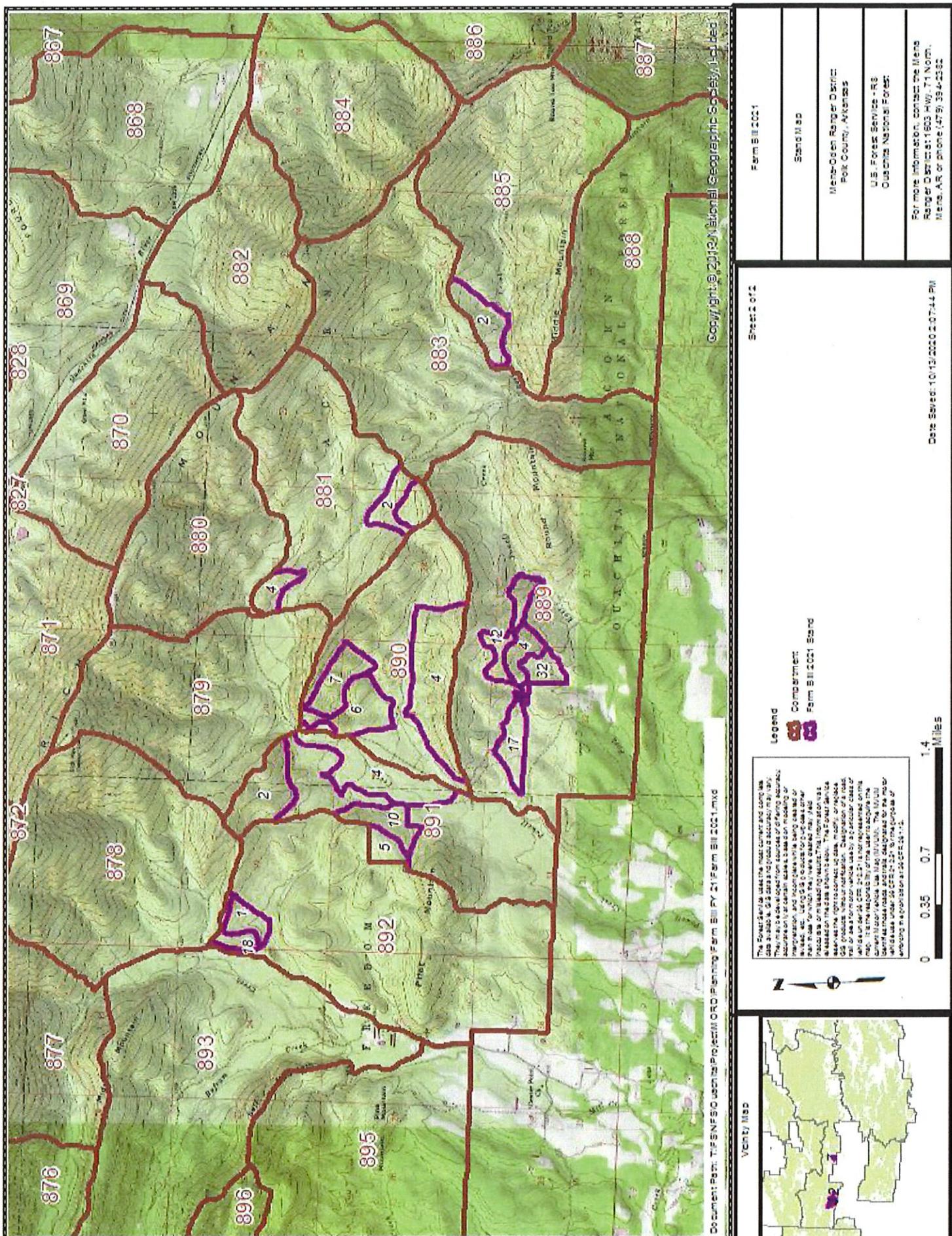
If you have questions about this project or would like more information, please contact **Jennifer Benefield** at (479) 394-2382 or jennifer.benefield@usda.gov Mena/Oden District Ranger, **1603 Hwy 71 North, Mena, AR, 71953**.

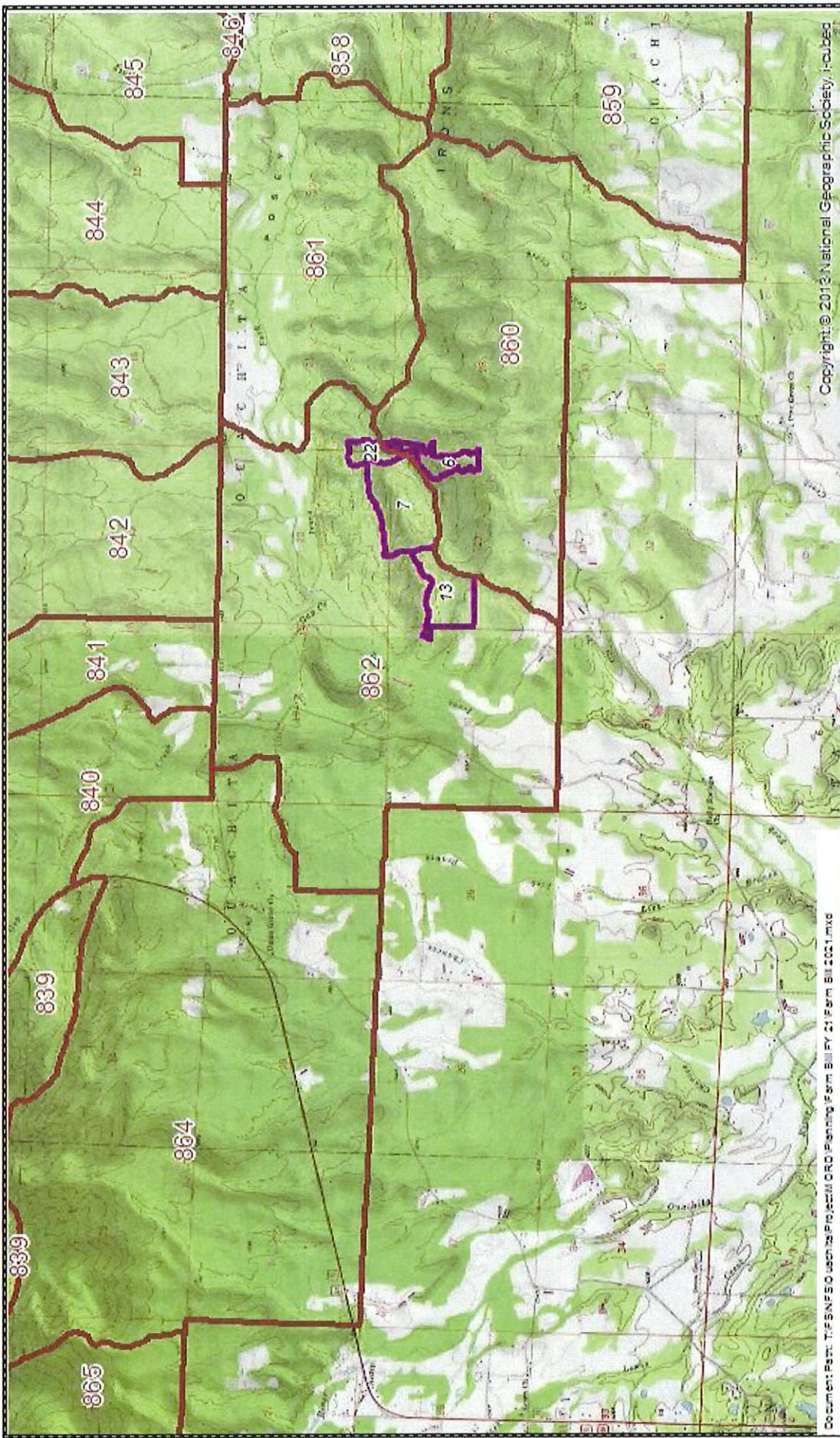
Sincerely,

Tim Oosterhous
District Ranger

Table 1: 2021 Farm Bill Thinning Stands

Compartment #	Stand #	Stand Acres
860	6	30
862	7	110
862	13	67
862	22	20
881	2	42
881	4	35
885	2	66
889	4	37
889	12	53
889	17	49
890	4	184
890	6	82
890	7	65
891	2	103
891	4	134
891	10	54
892	1	35
892	5	26
892	18	24
889	32	34
Total Acres		1,250





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